"Is there such place? A place where people are truly valued and free, no matter who they are?"

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Original Edition
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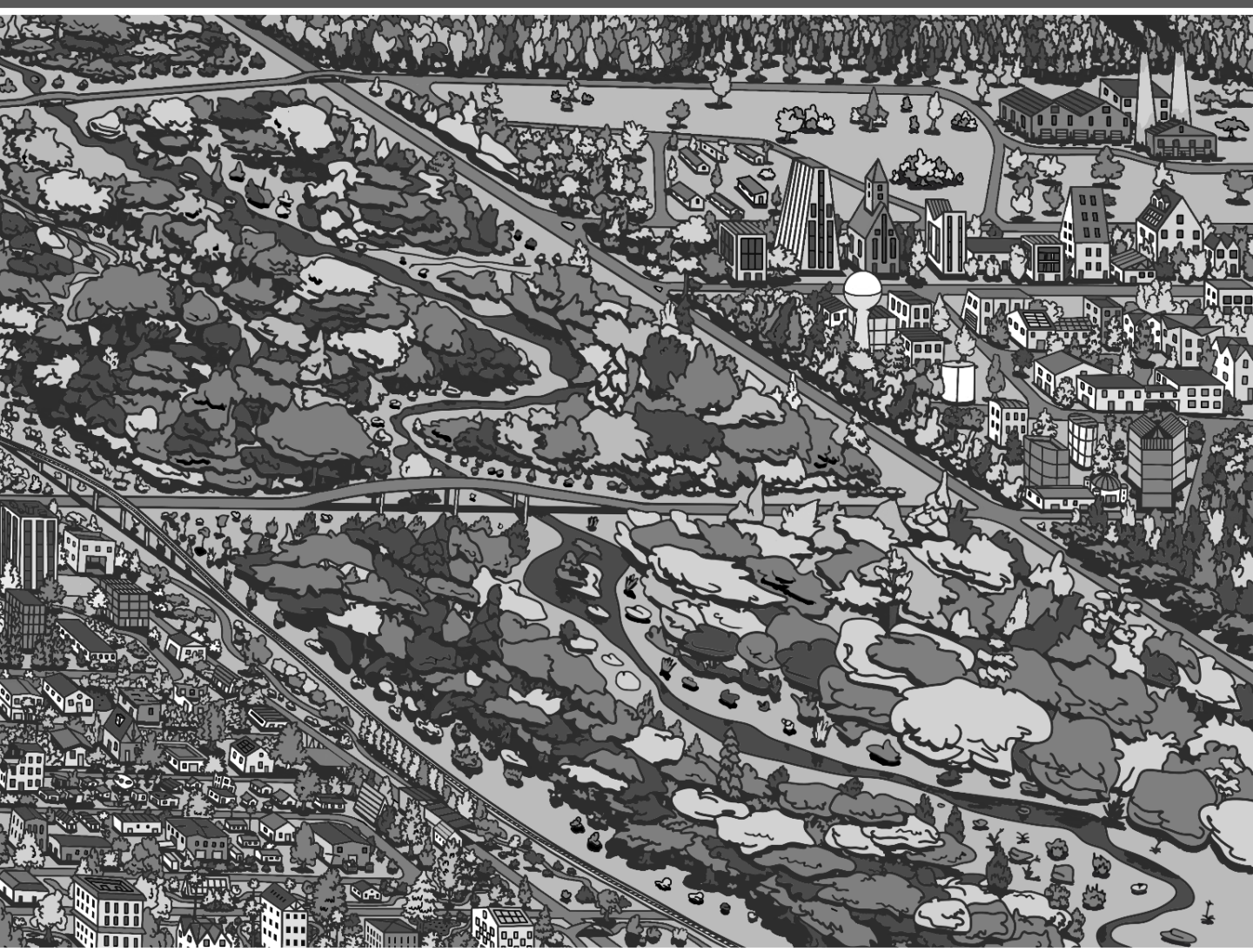
Adults Only



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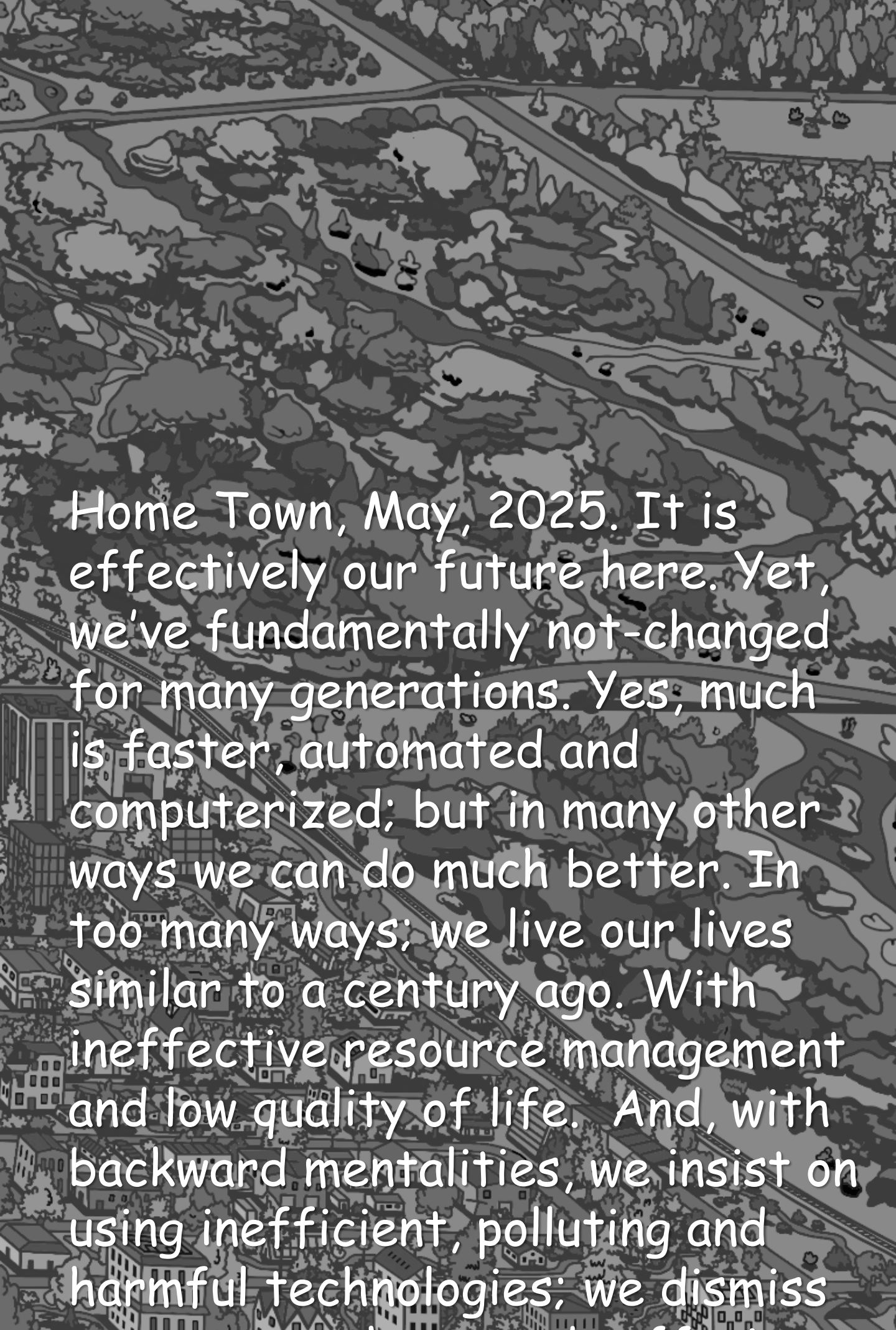
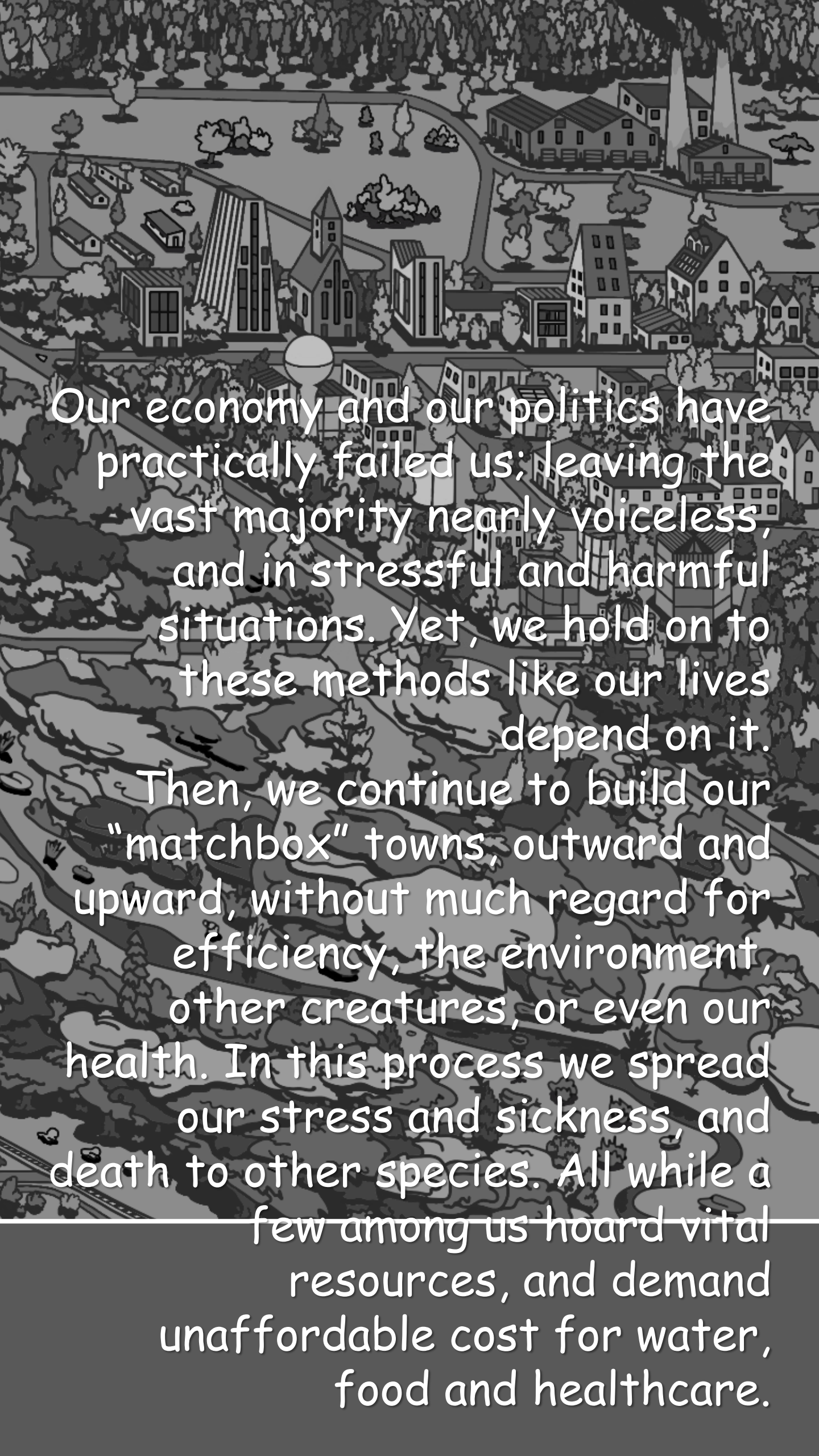
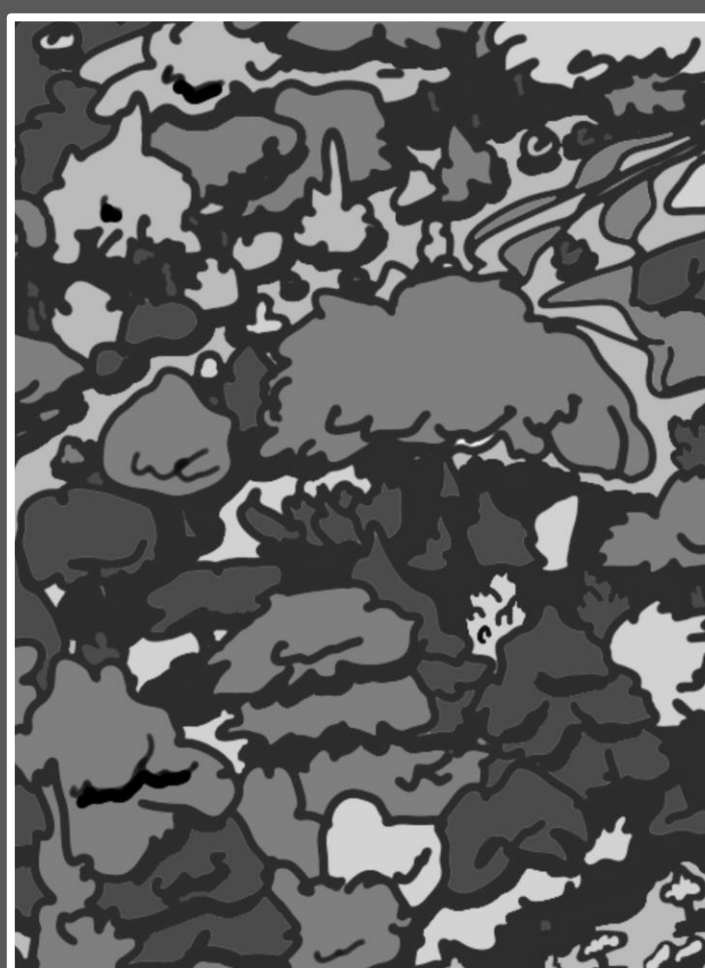

Home Town, May, 2025. It is effectively our future here. Yet, we've fundamentally not-changed for many generations. Yes, much is faster, automated and computerized; but in many other ways we can do much better. In too many ways; we live our lives similar to a century ago. With ineffective resource management and low quality of life. And, with backward mentalities, we insist on using inefficient, polluting and harmful technologies; we dismiss unnecessary harm and suffering as "just how things are"; and encourage violence, sickness, and destitution among most of us.


Our economy and our politics have practically failed us; leaving the vast majority nearly voiceless, and in stressful and harmful situations. Yet, we hold on to these methods like our lives depend on it.
Then, we continue to build our "matchbox" towns, outward and upward, without much regard for efficiency, the environment, other creatures, or even our health. In this process we spread our stress and sickness, and death to other species. All while a few among us hoard vital resources, and demand unaffordable cost for water, food and healthcare.

In Hometown, we're rapidly layering over the earth, which would otherwise give us food. And, food and energy production remains polluting and costly. Here, every individual must pay. Pay, or be rejected, be sick, homeless, or starved. And, the few demand a very specific way of life, where everyone is indoctrinated to it through the internet, television, and schools.

Is there another way to all which is clearly harmful? Are there those that have dared to say "no more"?

Legend has it; there are people that live happy and hidden lives, outside of this rigid and unforgiving system…



The
AMERICAN
Bladimir
PICTURES
Presents

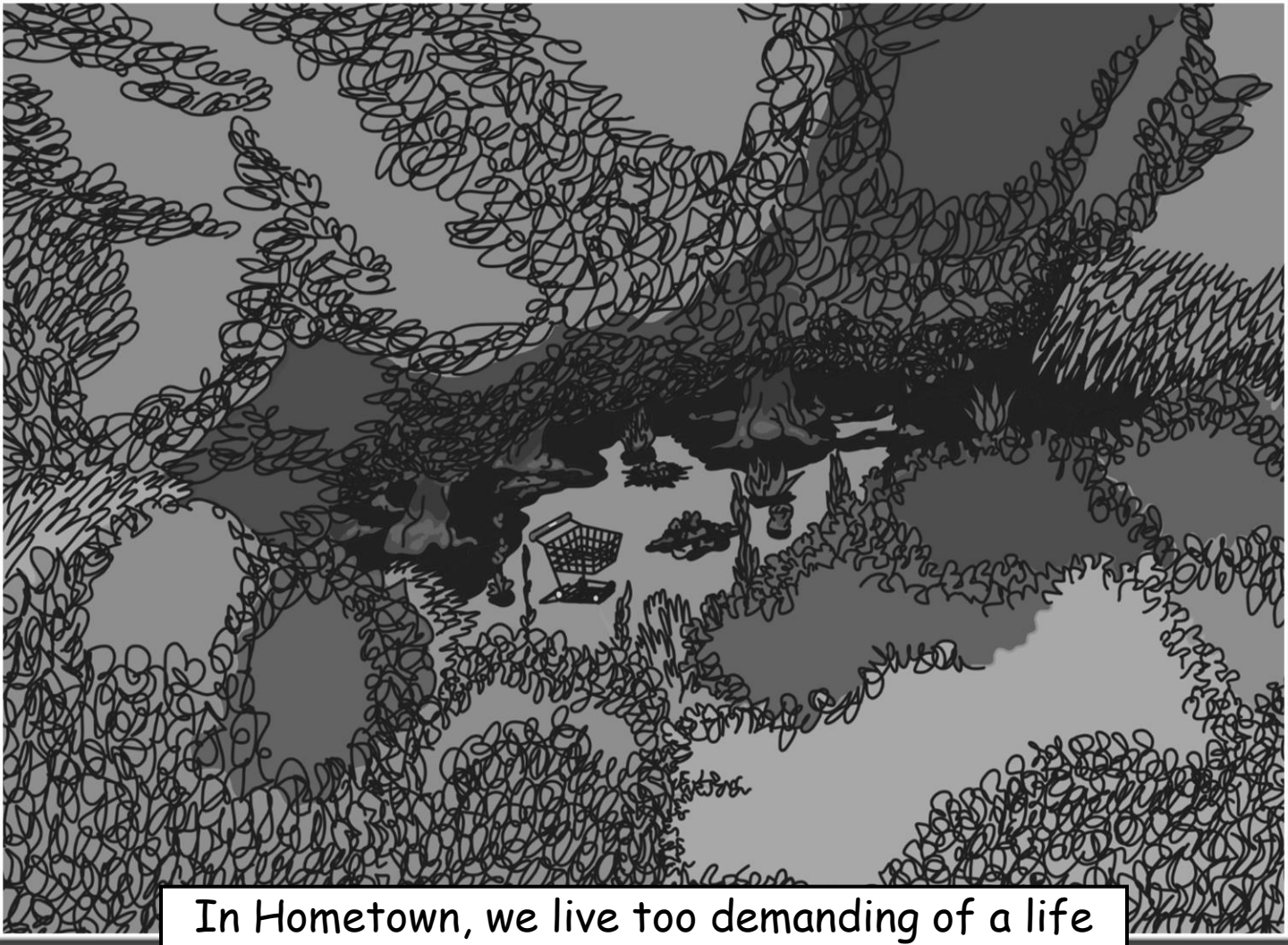
The Woodsfolk

Story and art by
Hector Vladimir Bello
March – May 2025

Original Edition
Unpublished
Adults Only

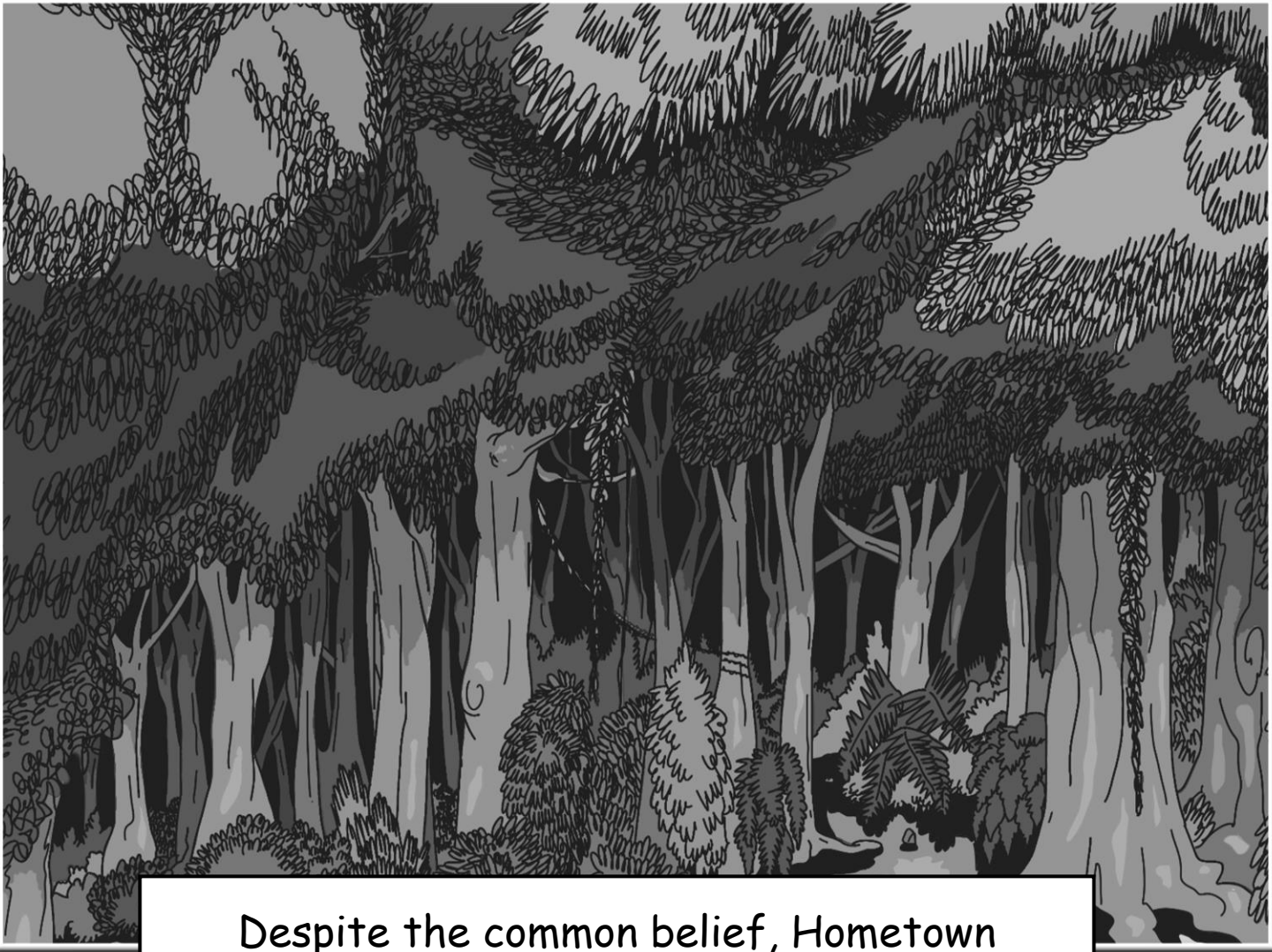
Call us the woodsfolk, known only to legend, we have lived in isolation for generations. You, not us, have chosen to separate. We remain on the right path. You continue to choose bondage and destruction. We chose freedom and a better world. We live our way; in the lands that truly belong to everyone born. We take no part in your life, as you remain truncated and violent. We venture among you, from time to time, to share and learn, though being careful to stay out of your reach.

You've purposely forgotten a vast number of your own, so our world grows from those you call "your least". Your harmful machinations have pushed our bold actions, and those, not us; may bring your doom. Our elders recall your pains, and our young don't know about you. You remain a myth, as we remain your fantasy.



In Hometown, we live too demanding of a life to notice things right under our noses. Our pressures keep our eyes fixed on making money, getting-by, and impressing others.

Perhaps some have exploited our sickening distraction from life. And have broken away from our economic and social bondage without our notice.



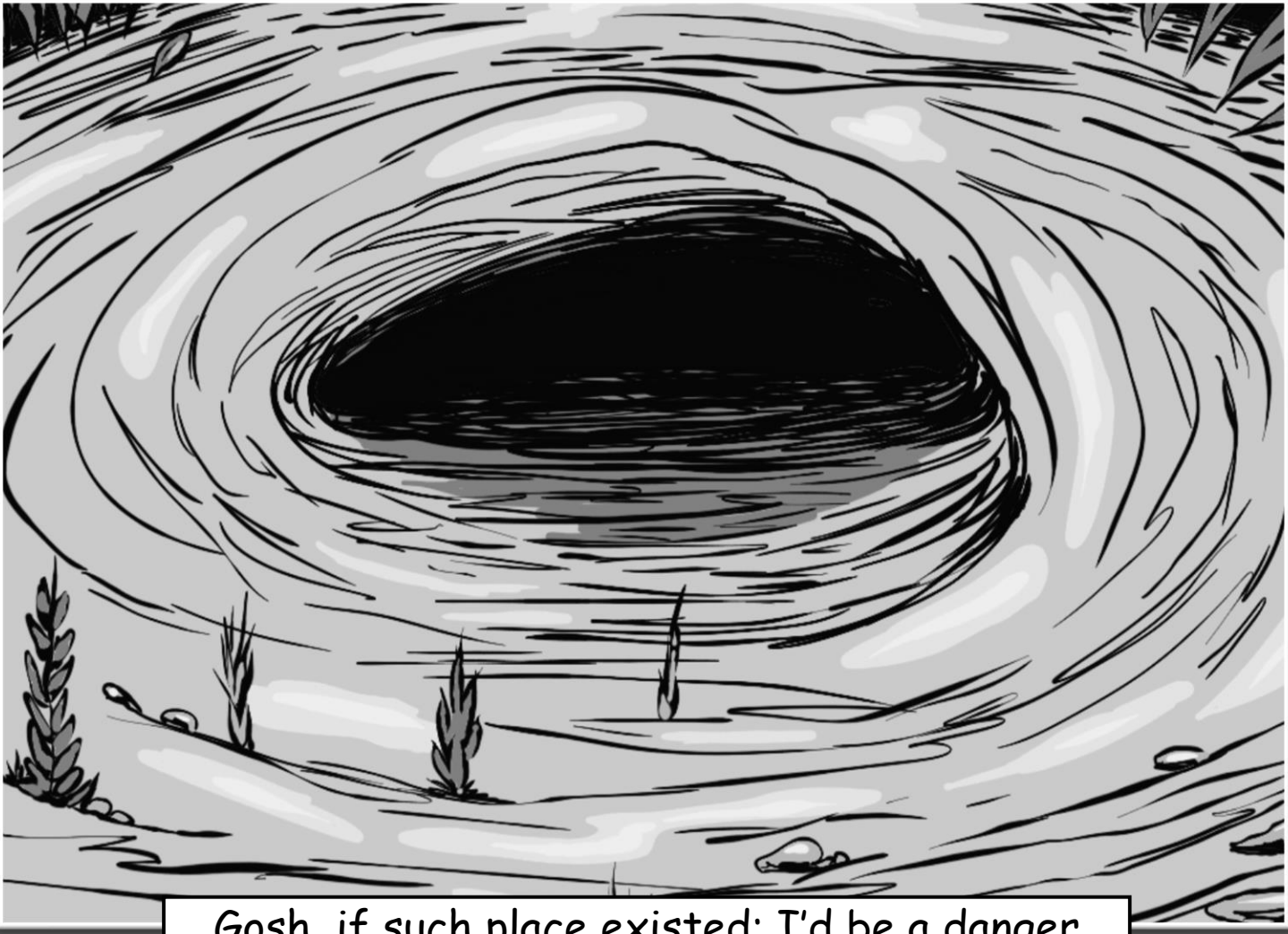
Despite the common belief, Hometown remains underpopulated by people. Vast lands and forests remain unbothered.

Perhaps “they” have filled-in many of these areas, which most of us deem too-far, too-wild, too-uncomfortable.

Perhaps, "they" live free, deep in the back woods of Hometown. Or the back woods of most other towns.

When I walk on the wooded outskirts of Hometown, I often stare into the darkened trails and wonder: Is there such place? A place where people are truly valued and free, no matter who they are?

A place utterly out of reach for the unjust, ill-intended, violent, greedy, selfish, and malicious. A place only reachable by the kindest, selfless, bravest, most-wishing, just, entrusting, and accepting among us.

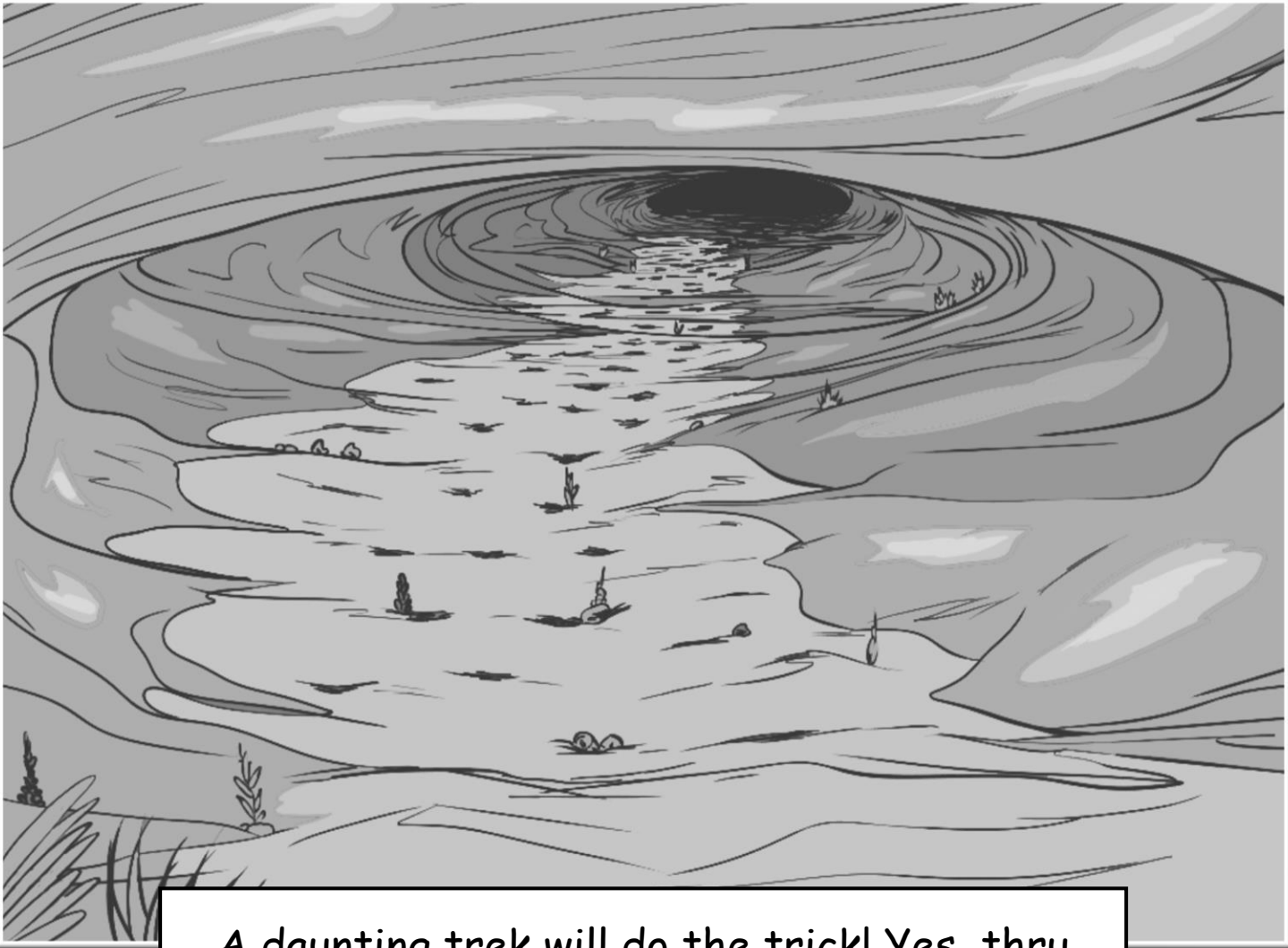


Gosh, if such place existed; I'd be a danger for those living there, if the wicked were to reach it. I'm sure they'd protect it well. Somehow…

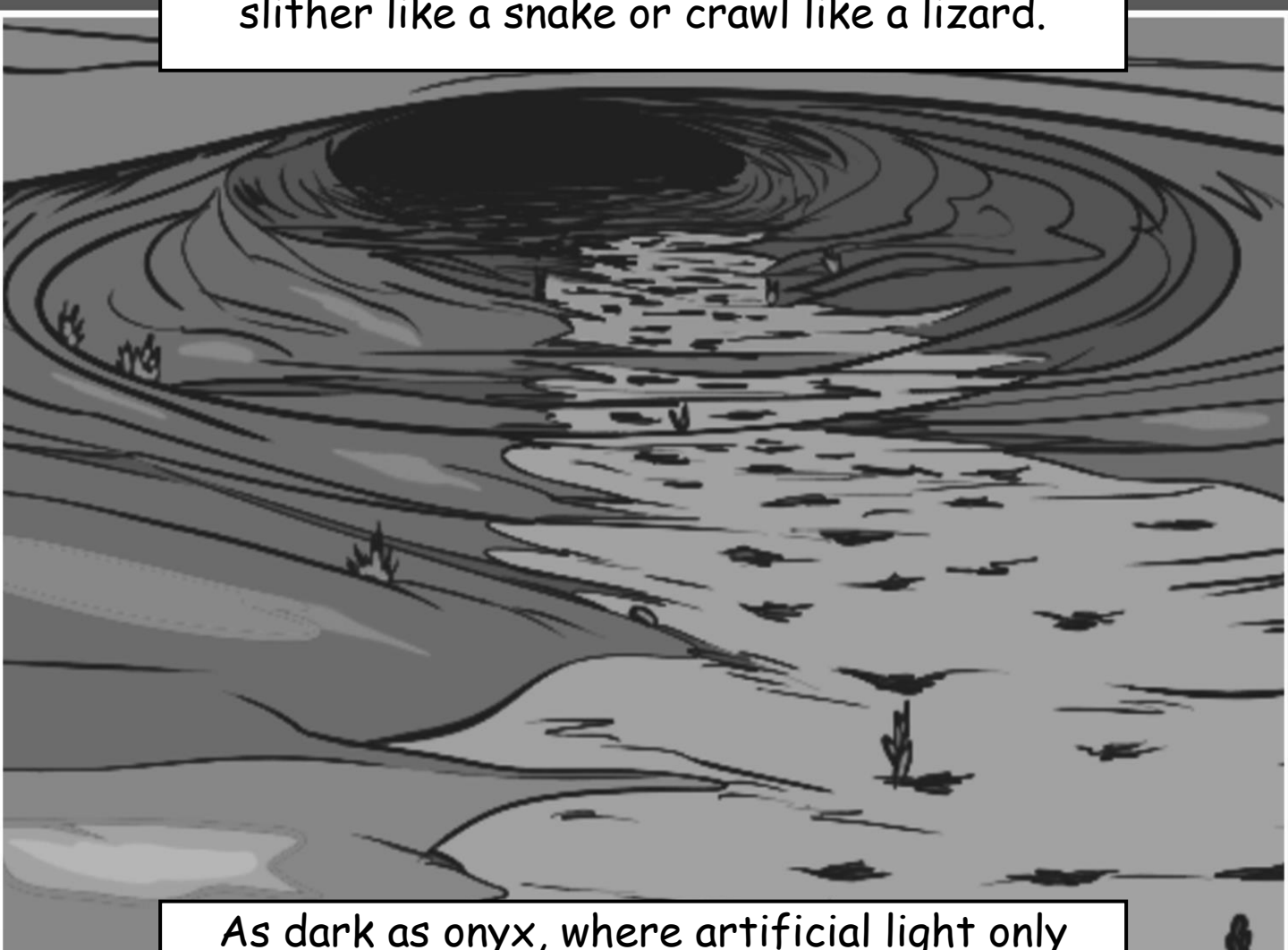
Perhaps they'd separate such place with the wicked's greatest fear. Perhaps with several of such barriers.

Distance will discontent the lazy; discomfort will keep the pretentious home; and darkness will keep the fearful away.

May be, “they” use these barriers to keep all the “unready” away.

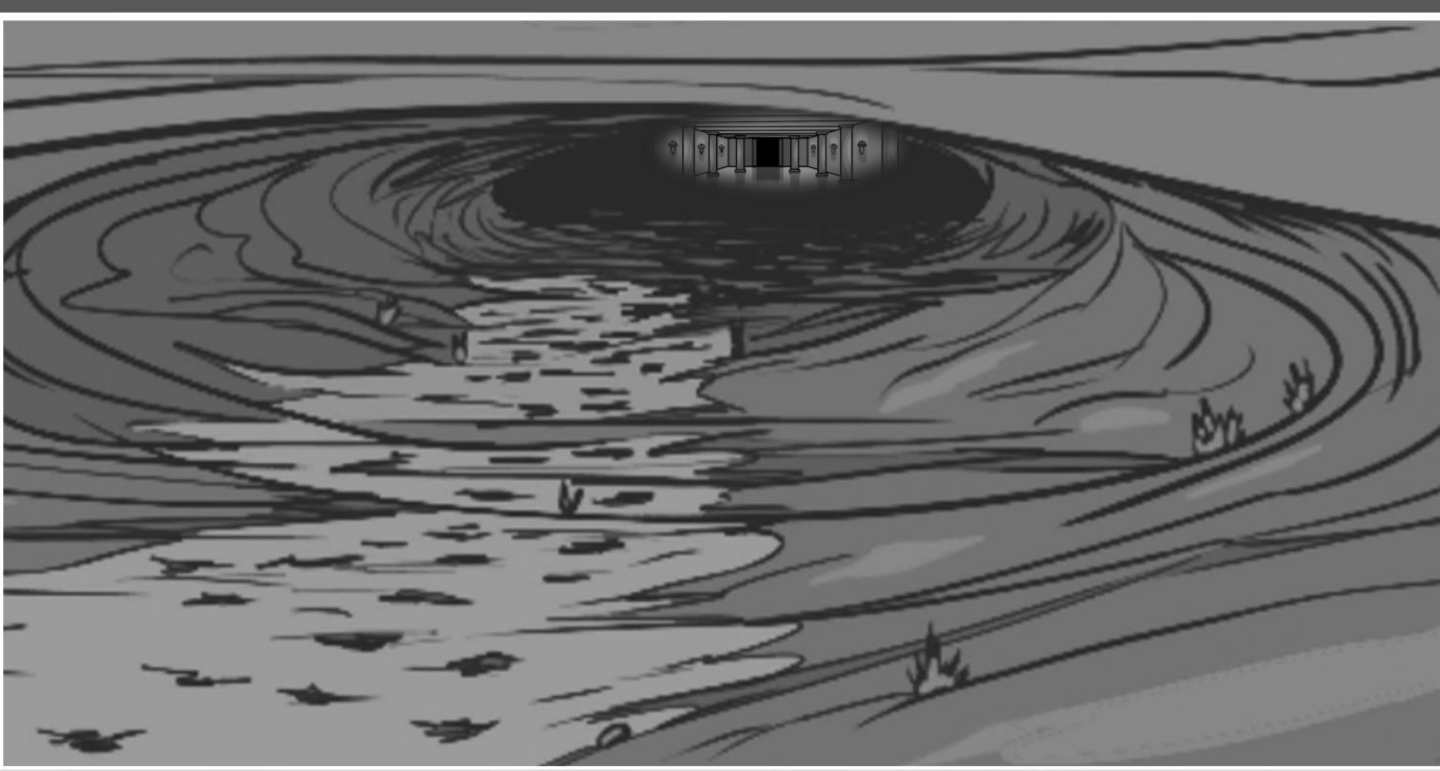


A daunting trek will do the trick! Yes, thru hot, humid, waste-deep mud, infested cave systems. Going through areas where you must slither like a snake or crawl like a lizard.

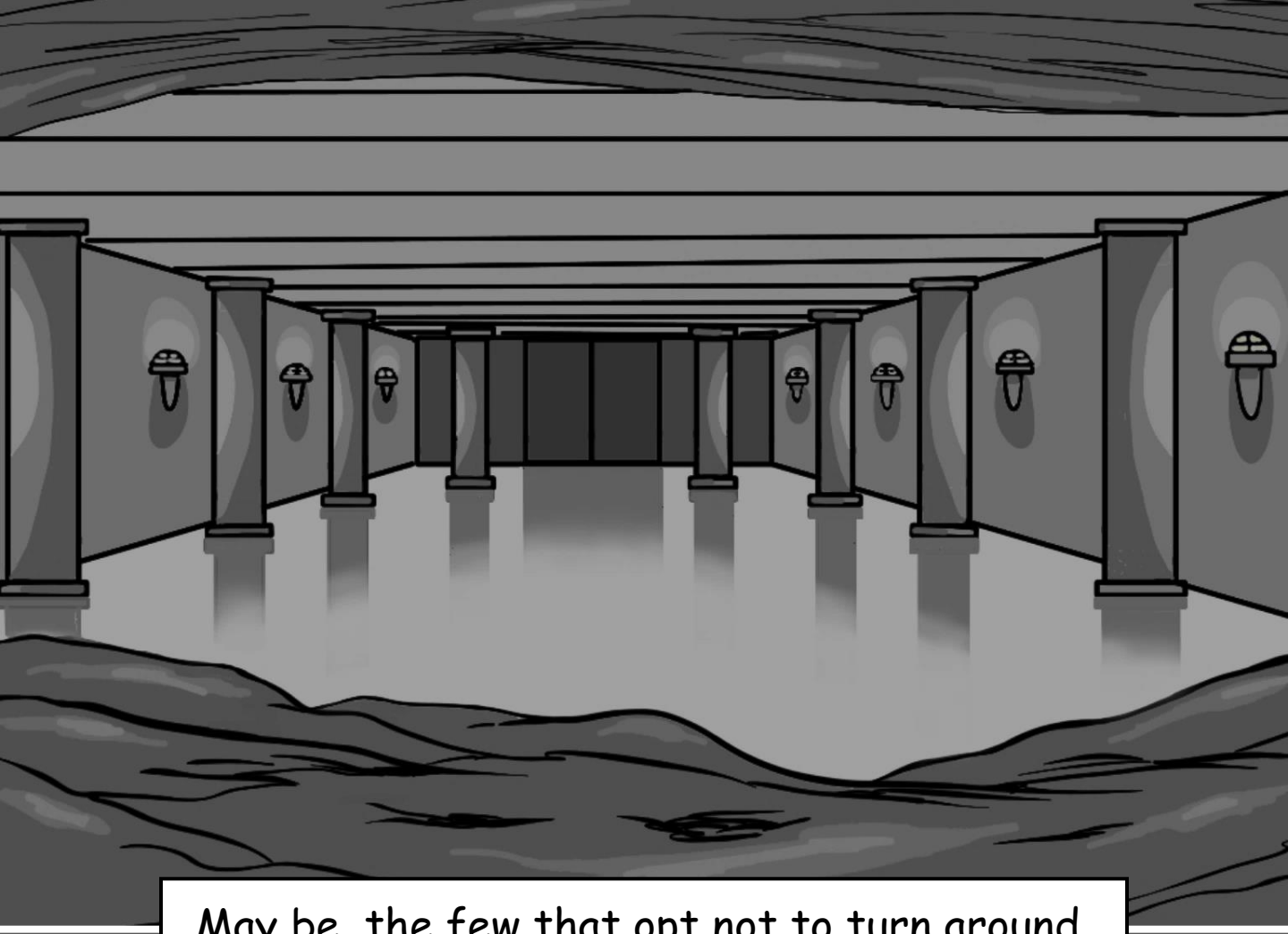


As dark as onyx, where artificial light only reveals the dust a few steps in front of you, and perhaps allows you to duck flying vermin, launching snakes, and swinging spiders.

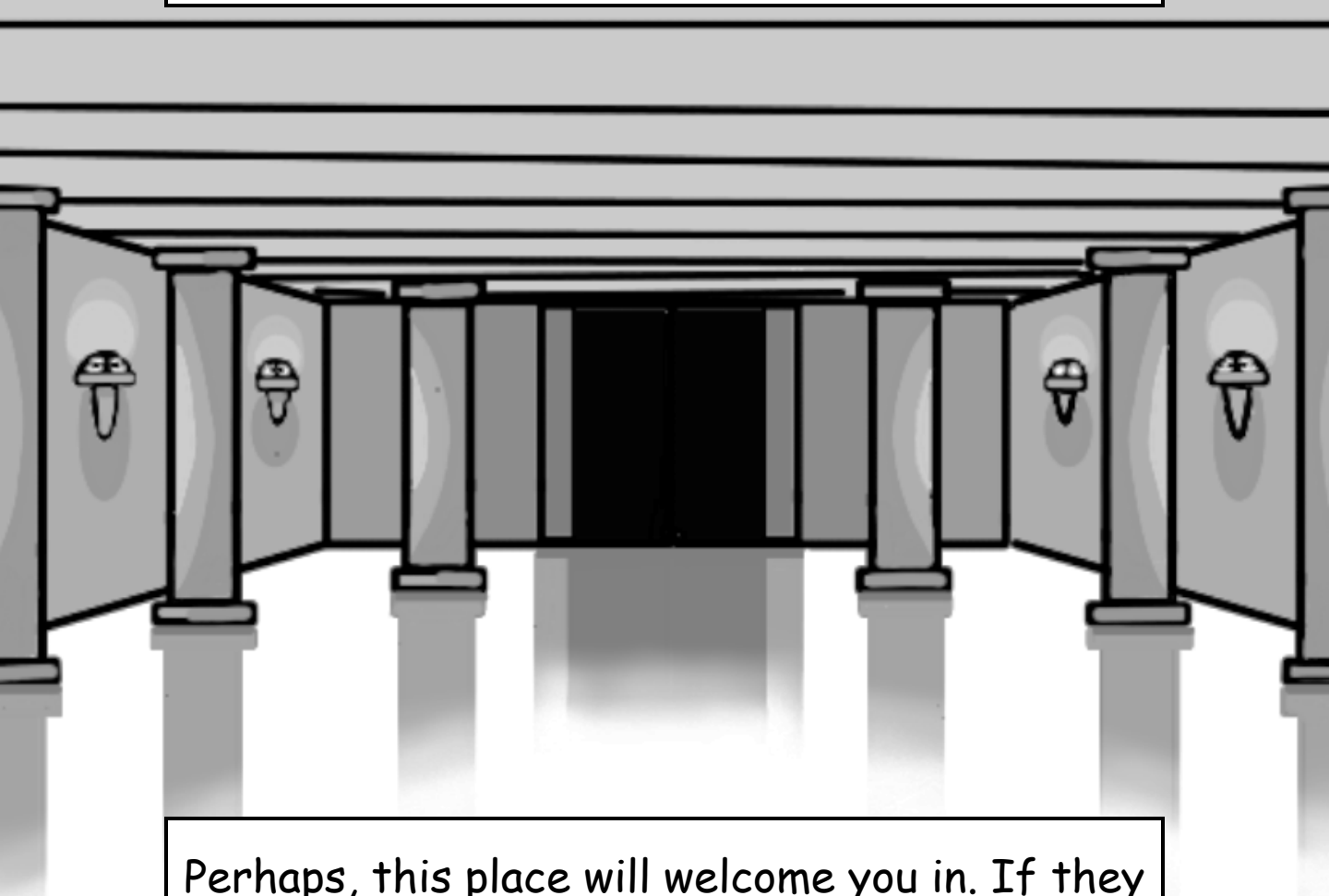
And, perhaps, after kilometers of this “blind walk of faith”; if you don’t take any wrong turns, you may catch a glimpse of light in the distance.



By then, surely exhausted, thirsty and hungry, you may not be sure that what you see is real.



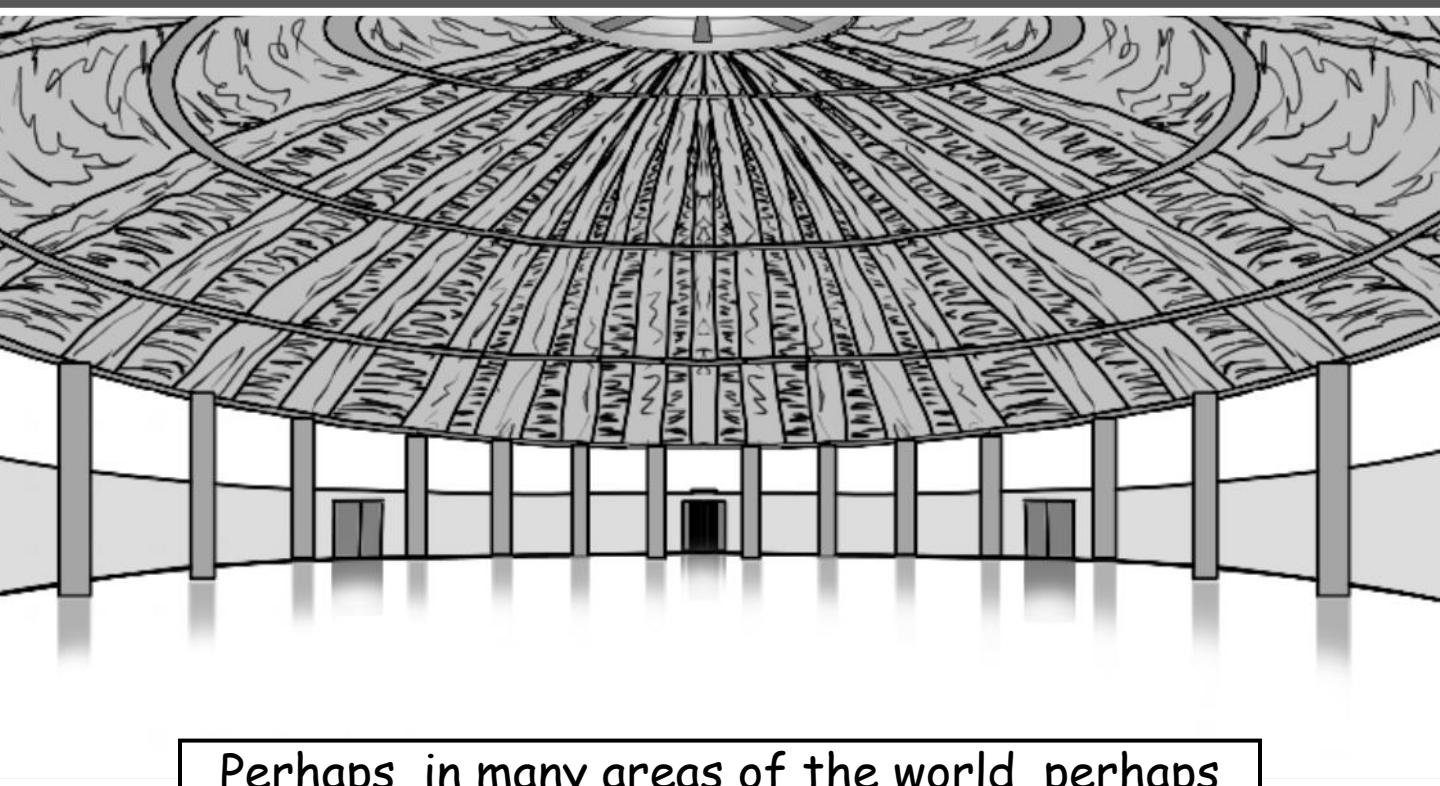
May be, the few that opt not to turn around, may walk into a place that screams "point of no return". No guards, no cameras, no security system to save you from what you may witness.



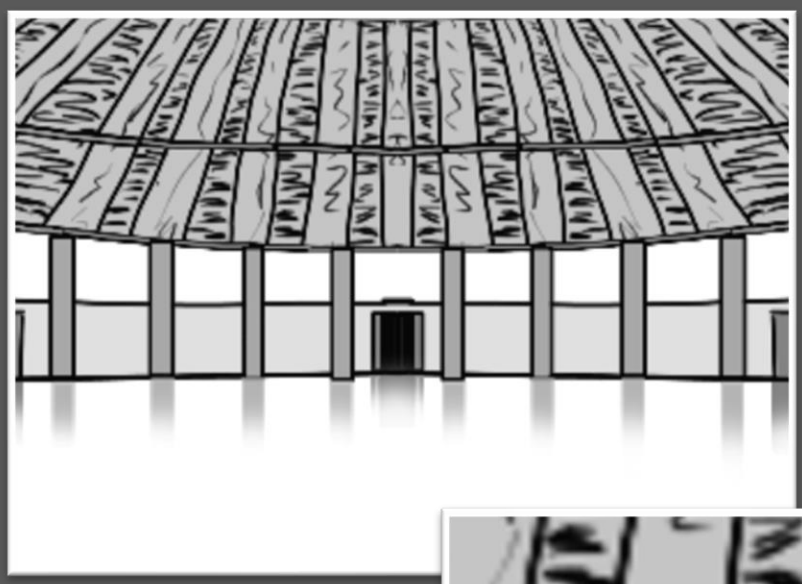
Perhaps, this place will welcome you in. If they suspect you're among "the few" that came for "all the right reasons".

How would such “people” live? How different can they be? How better-off, really, are they? How backward or advanced? The questions would be too many. But one question may be the most important; is it happier here?

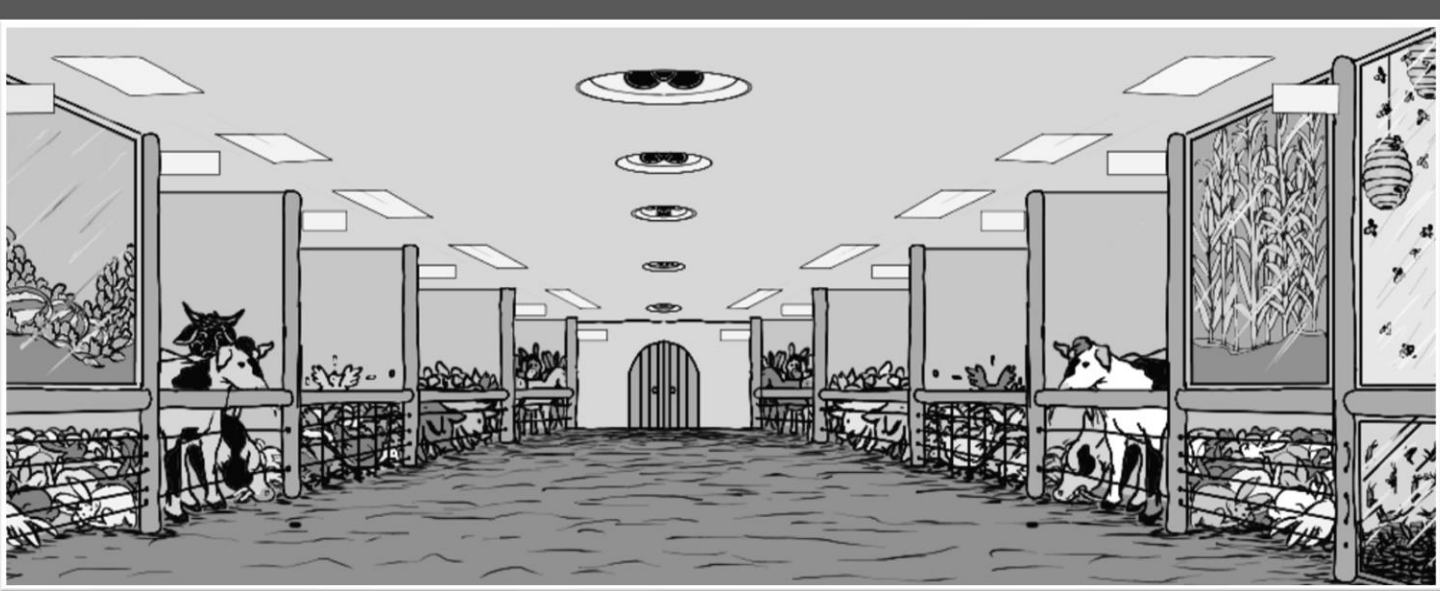
We may never find out about such place or people. But, just may be, perhaps by accident, we could get a hint to many of these questions’ answers.



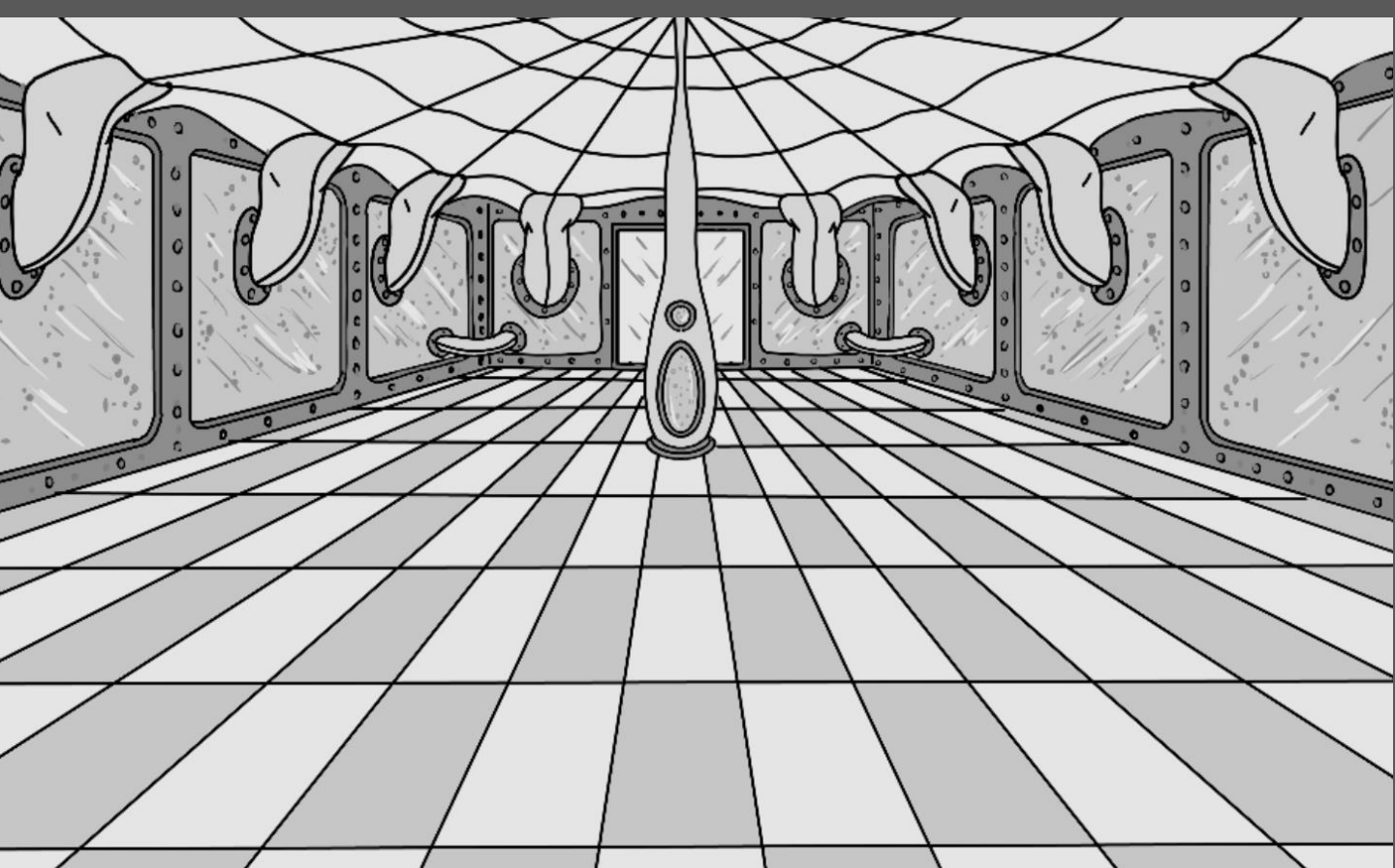
Perhaps, in many areas of the world, perhaps near Hometown; "they" have reached high levels of sophistication, technology, resource management, and more. Or, perhaps not. Choosing instead a simpler lifestyle.

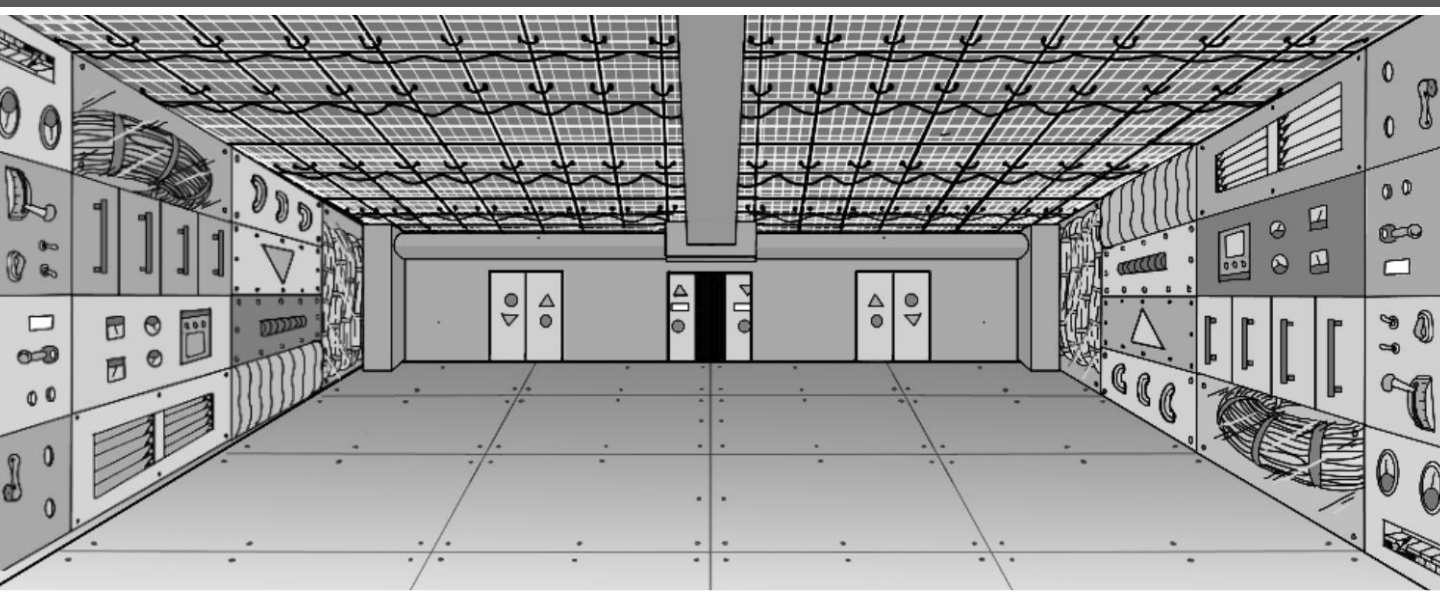


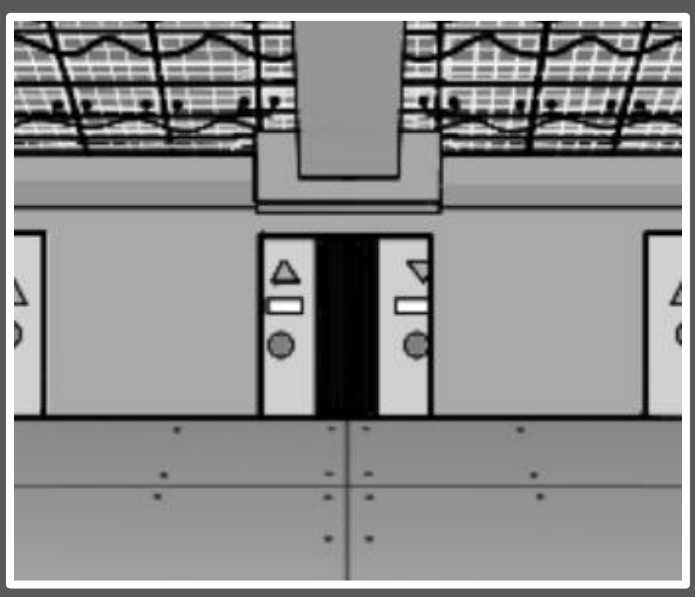
Efficiently producing and freely sharing what they need, and no more.



Perhaps they have borrowed much from our world and improved it. Or, much may be new concepts; tried and proven for generations.







Water, food, communication, transportation renewable energy, and other resources; may be managed to incredible efficiency levels. Perhaps they have discovered a social system that permits fast advantageous development.

Perhaps "within"; there are many families, many cultures, many peoples that live in harmony. Areas that branch and distribute through a complex network of communities; under and above ground.

Calm, clean, comfortable and safe. A place built for optimal health for all.

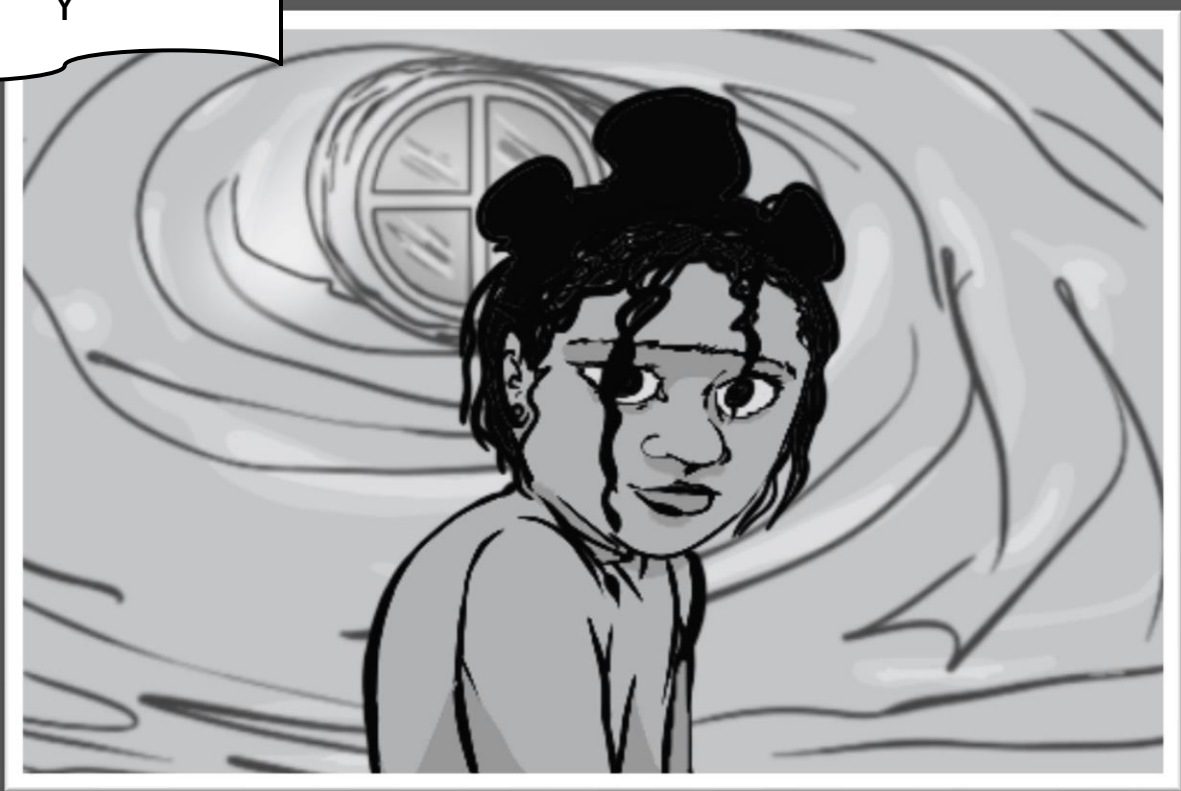
A place where locking your home is optional, and most care about what's really important…

Who's ready for dinner?
…Family, friendship, community, unity.
Always served during my busiest time?
Yeah, I'm busy!
How's my favorite family?

Z

What would such people be like? How'd they behave? What would they call themselves?

Y



X

W

V

In democratic fashion, help me name these characters. Contribute your suggested name in the comment section where this is posted.

U

Of course…
Yes pops, always glad when you join us.
Oh, always so happy to have such a bunch to share a meal with. May blessings keep falling upon this cave.
And my friend Annie's cave too!

Ah, yes! We're happy. But happy times were not always here. You know? Well, do I have a story to tell you all today…
!?

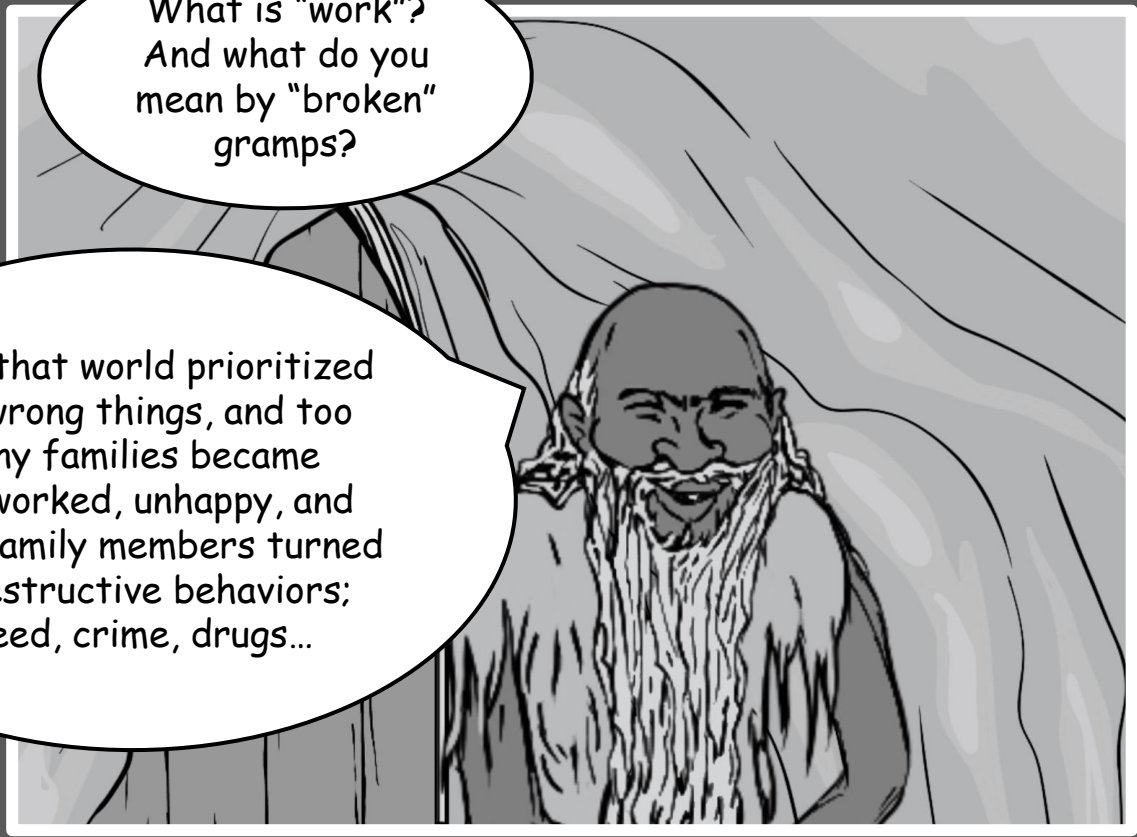
There's an old story about a world, far away from here. Where people live very differently from us…

…greed, selfishness, violence, and harm was rampant there…

Oh Jee, here we go…

…people toiled long days at work, young people were sent to crowded learning houses, and many families were broken.

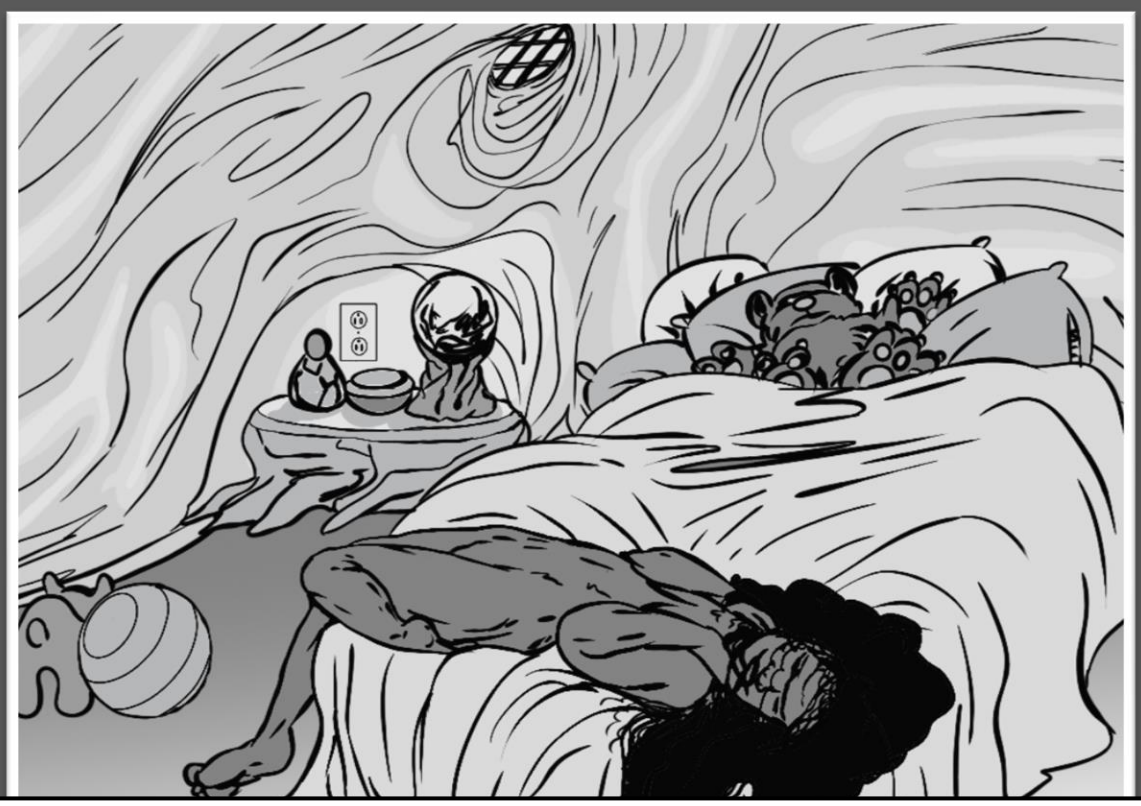
What is "work"? And what do you mean by "broken" gramps?



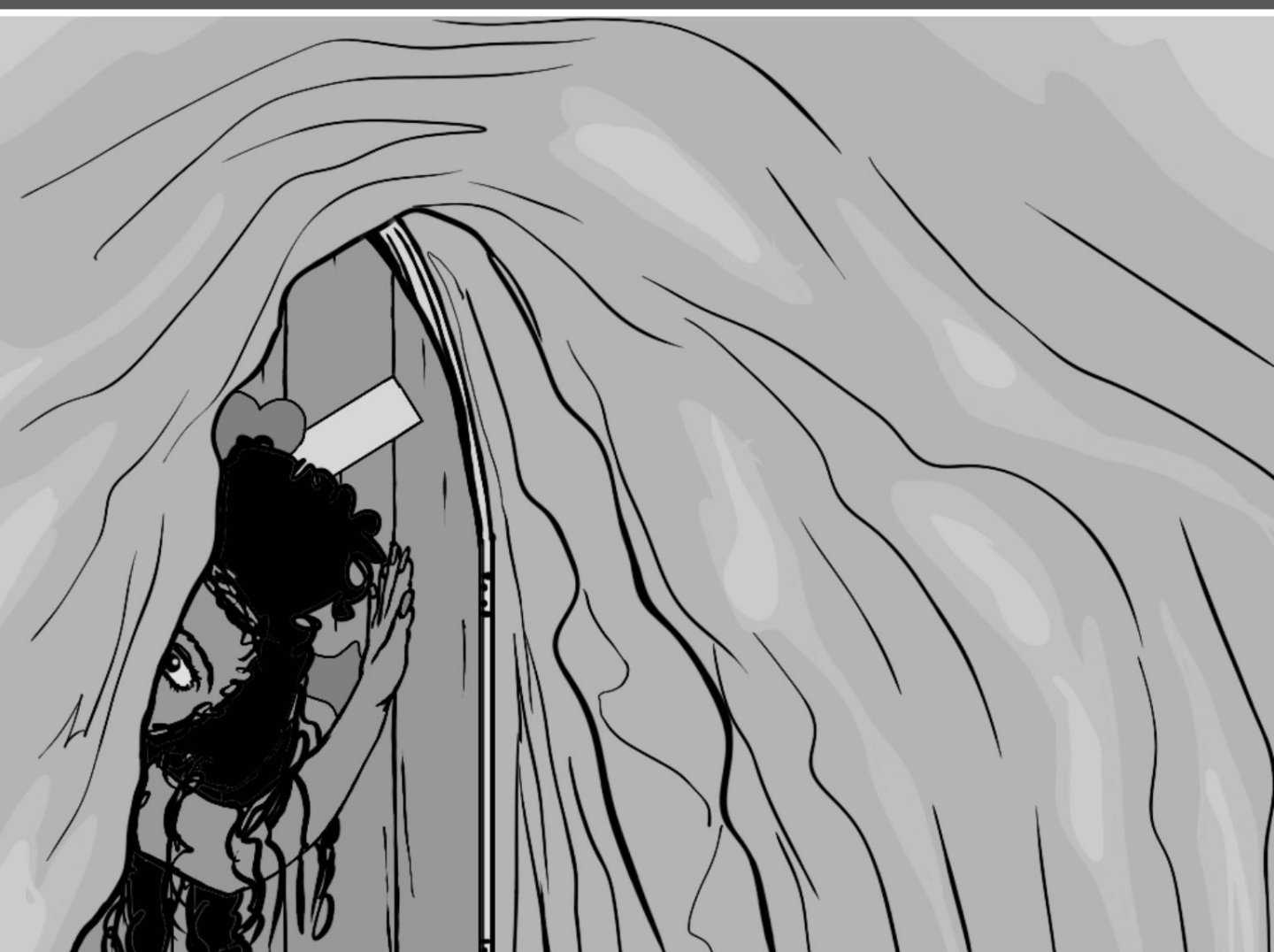
Well, that world prioritized the wrong things, and too many families became overworked, unhappy, and many family members turned to destructive behaviors; greed, crime, drugs…

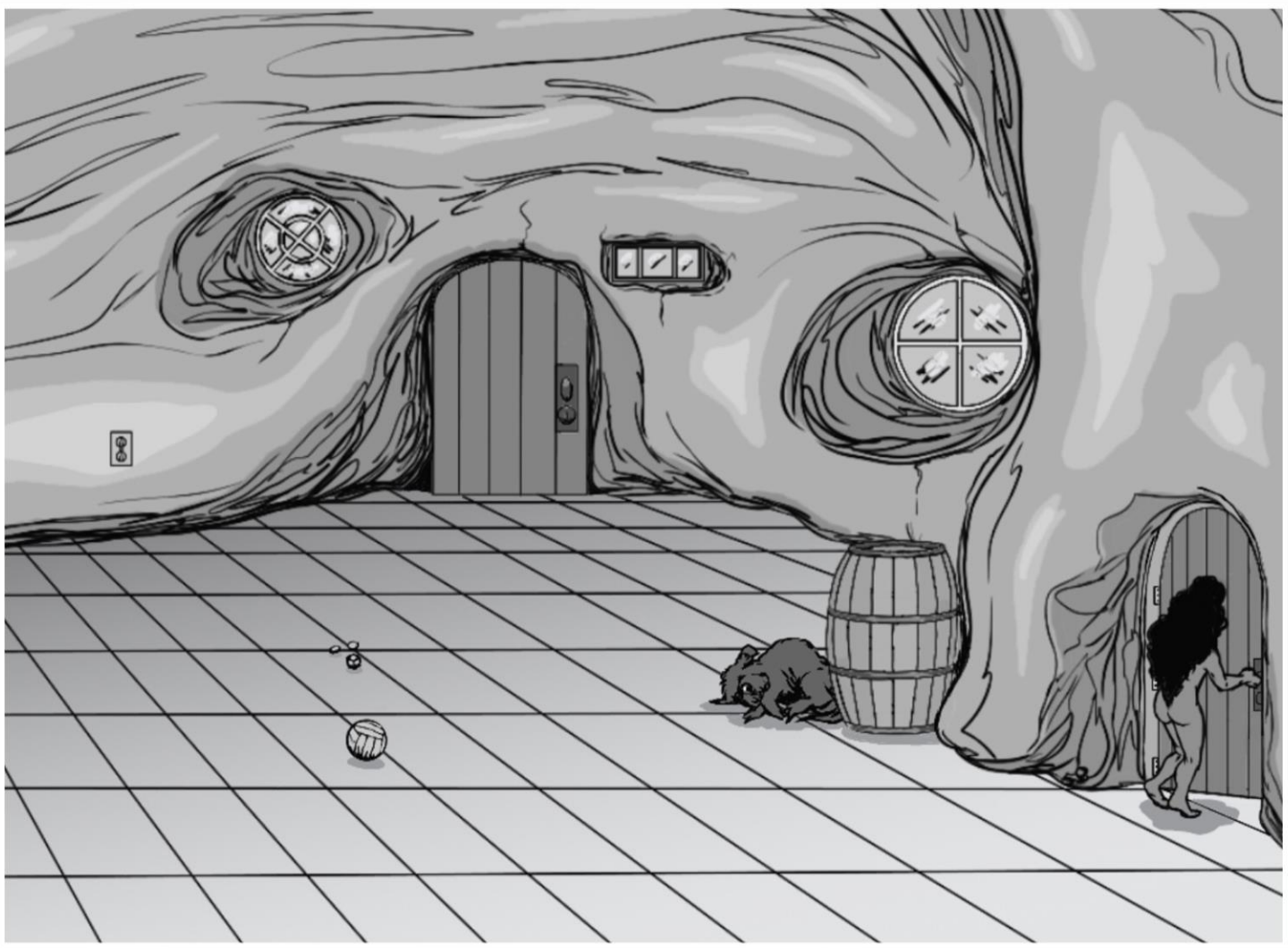
What is "greed", "crime", and "drugs" gramps?
There, many suffered because they had little to cover even their basic needs. Some had almost no access to shelter and doctors, and stressed unnecessarily.
While others horded too much, and took away from most. But, that world didn't see much wrong with these. As a result, too many suffered in scarcity, sickness, and unhappiness.

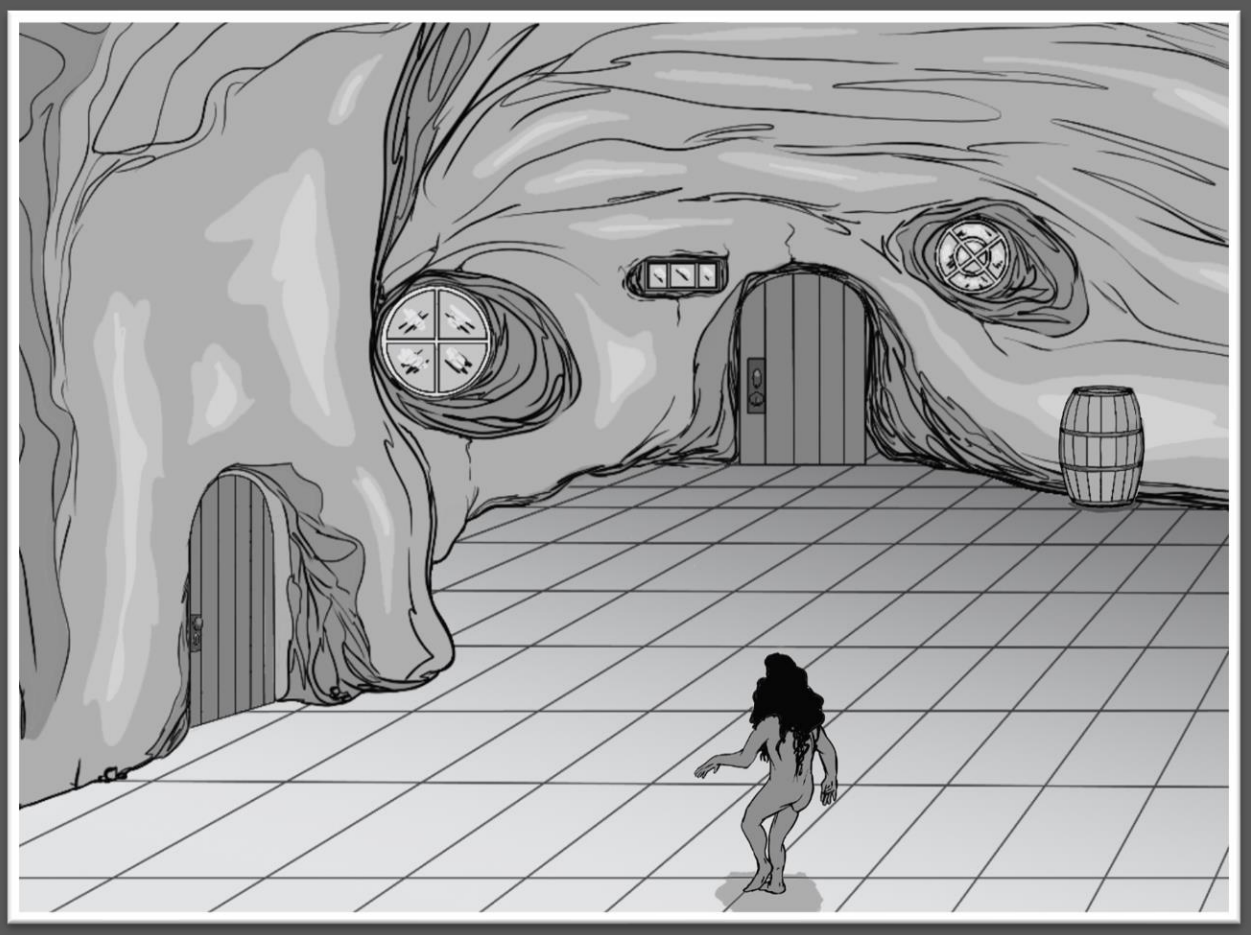
Okay, The Mrs. and I are going to call it a night. I believe the kids had enough story time to fill their dreams, so how about we pick it up tomorrow, heh!
Okay little miss, Let's go to sleep.
Of course, always willing to share!
Is that world still there, gramps?
Okay, Mr. Curious George, let's get you to bed, it's shop day for you tomorrow at the center.
Good night youngins! Sleep well.

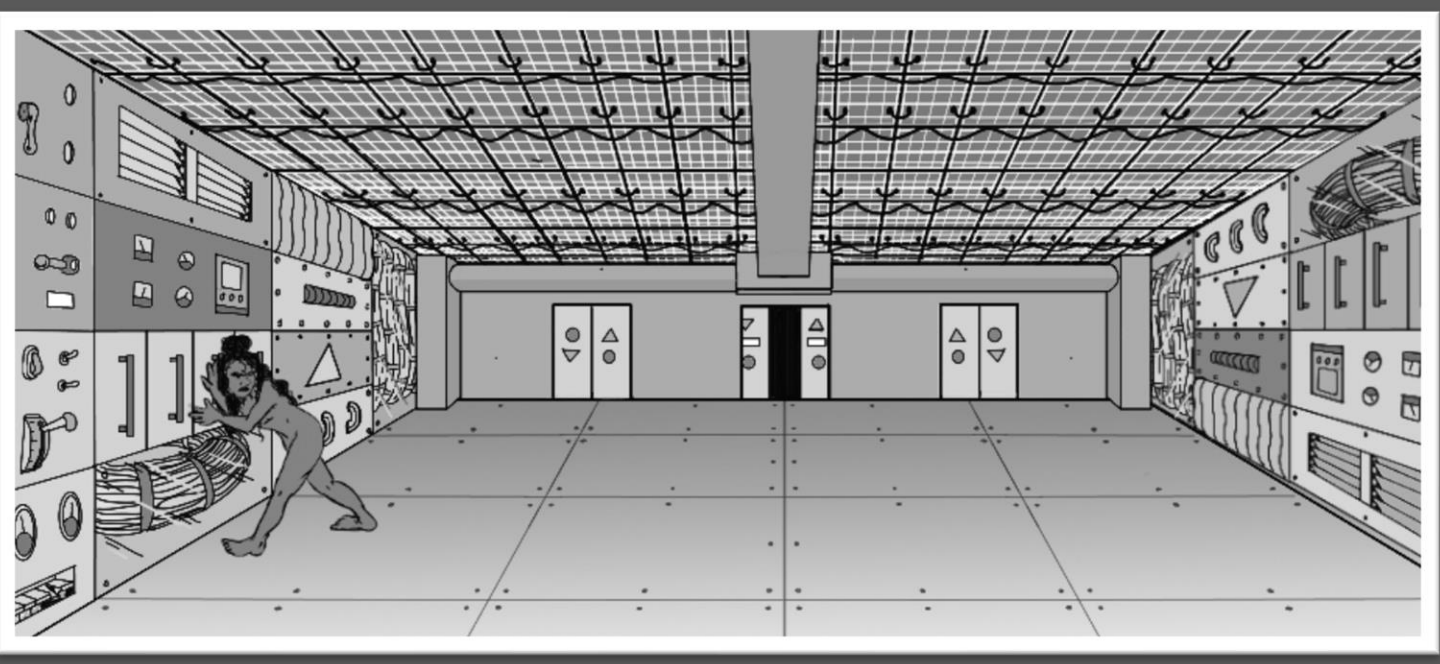


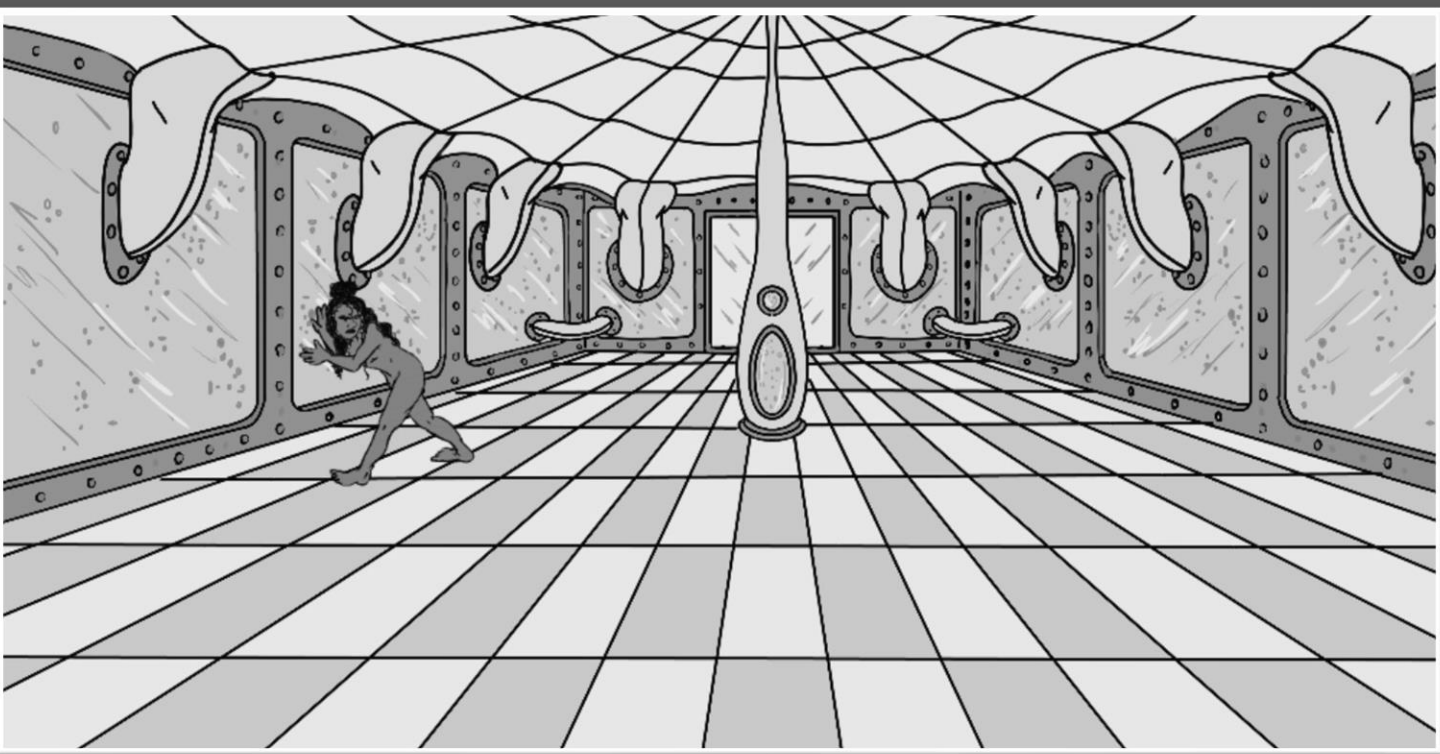
An unexpected member of the family was overtaken with thoughts and fantasies. Perhaps Gramp's story had some to do with these. Perhaps other goings too drove some coming bold and daring actions from this young member.

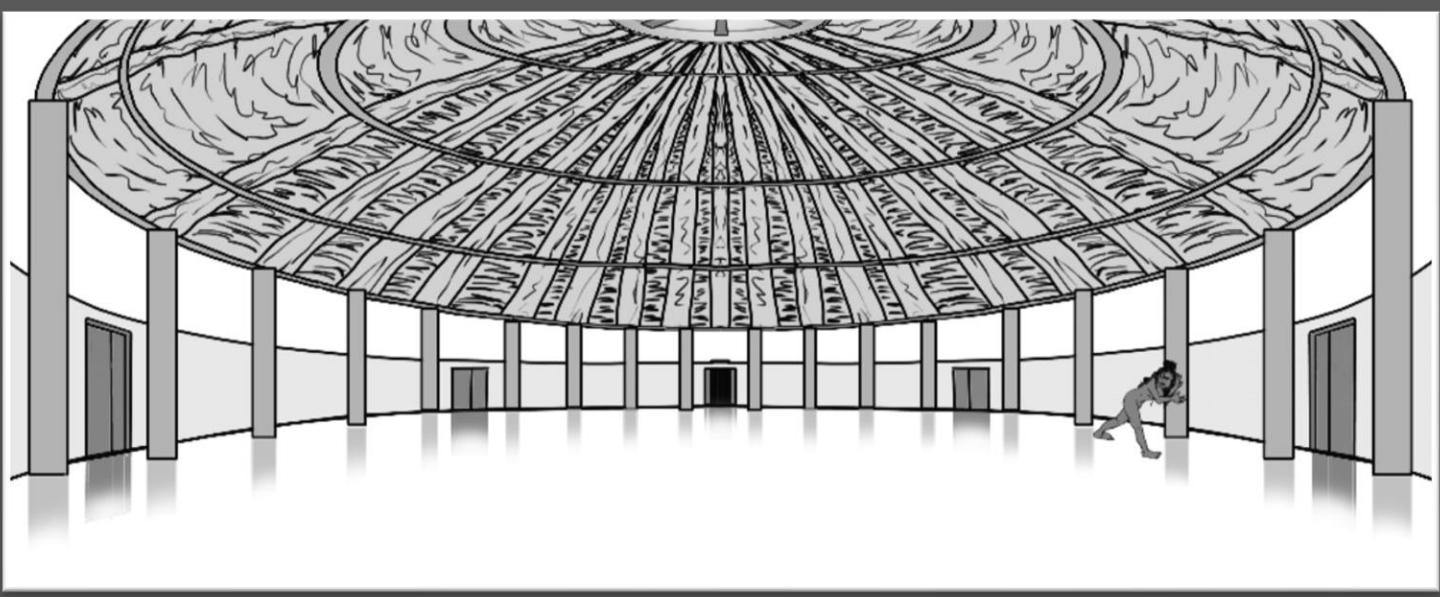






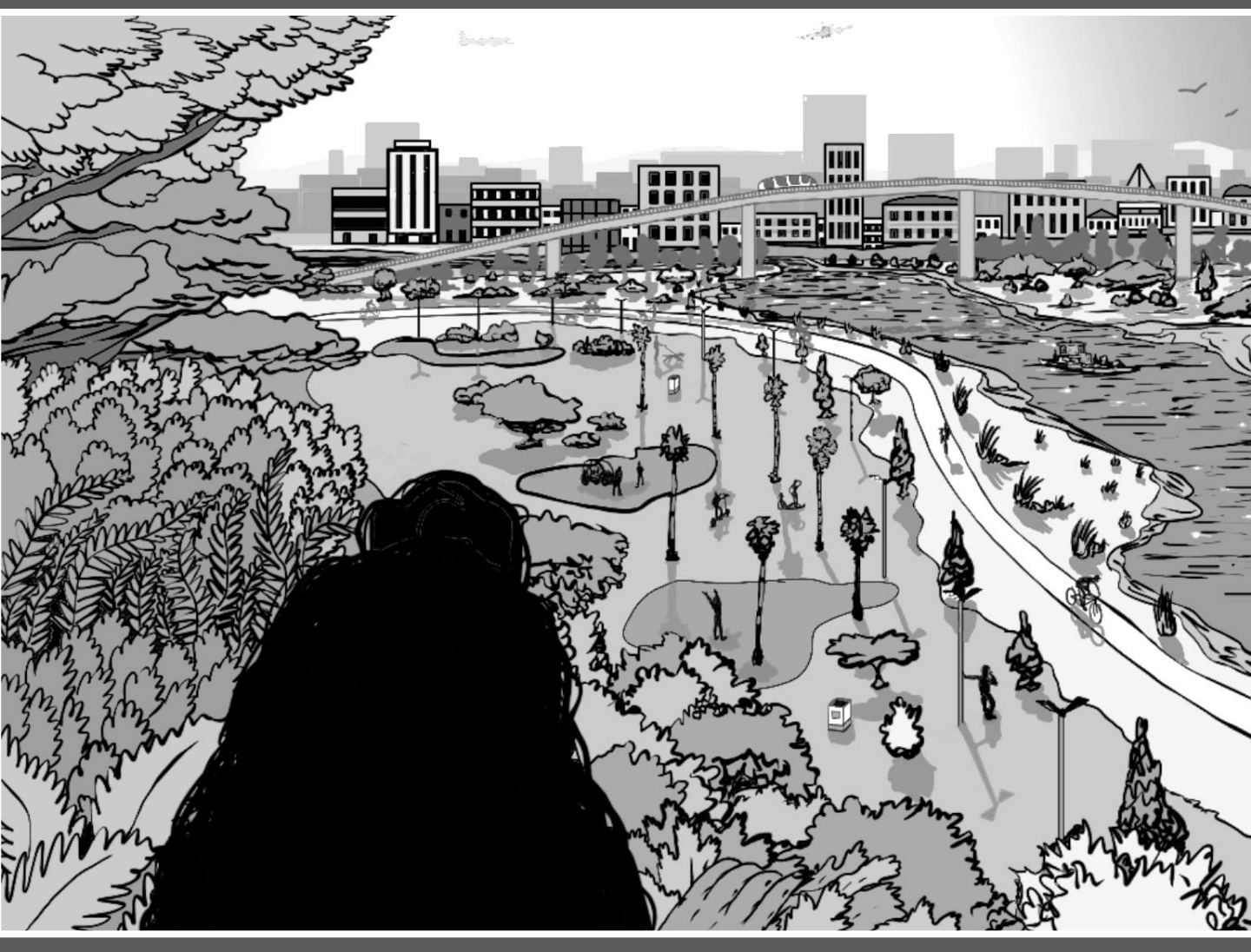






The drive was unknown and intense enough to propel this young one many kilometers of adventurous trek, to a place utterly unknown and new.

To a place, perhaps, too vast, overwhelming and unexpected; to be true.
What in the World!?



The Woodsfolk

To be continued.

Thank you!

Story and art by
Hector Vladimir Bello
March – May 2025

Presented
By